

Building  
Comprehension:  
Big Ideas and  
Preparing to Read

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EDC 423

# Today's Essential Question

- *Why teach reading comprehension as inquiry-based problem solving?* Cornett suggests...
- Adopt an “**inquiry**” **stance** where comprehending content is the central problem to be solved when approaching any text
- Focus on the product of the comprehension process => **BIG IDEAS**
- Organize strategy use in a **Before/During/After** framework to support readers at all levels



# Objectives

- Discuss connections between five factors that influence comprehension
- **READER FACTORS:**
  - Identify the types of background knowledge that can influence comprehension
- **TEACHER FACTORS:**
  - Identify the **teacher's role** at each stage of reading (Before, During, and After reading)
  - Observe and apply ways to **launch a book** (pre-reading activity) to **set a context** that engages readers with the **main ideas** and the **big ideas**
- **TRY IT OUT:**
  - Work in small group to determine the big idea in a children's text & plan a book launch

# Five Factors of Comprehension that Anchor Instructional Problem Solving

Opportunities to Differentiate and Create Conditions for Success  
(see p. 19-20)

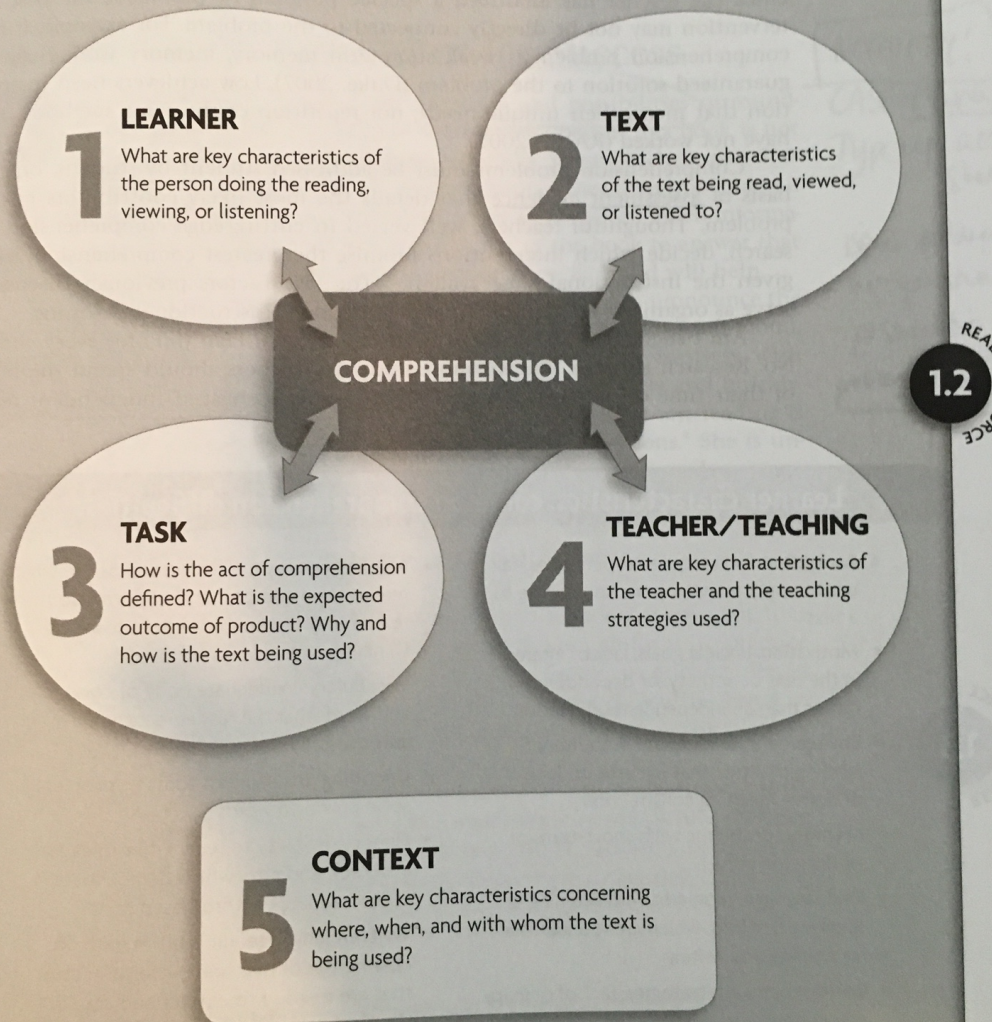
1. Learner characteristics
2. Teacher Characteristics/Teaching Practices  
(motivate readers, model knowledge of the processes through strategy instruction, discussion, instructional routines, response options, assess impact on learning)
3. Text characteristics (range of genres, structures, media)
4. Task (How is comprehension defined? Recall, meaning making, critical thinking, dialogue, group work, reflection, response...)
5. Context (where, when, with whom text is used)



## Five Factors of comprehension.

### BIG IDEAS

Text comprehension varies because of the influence of these Five Factors. When educators use these factors to guide assessment and planning, the result is differentiated instruction that addresses diverse needs of students.





How do these five  

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elements fit  
together??



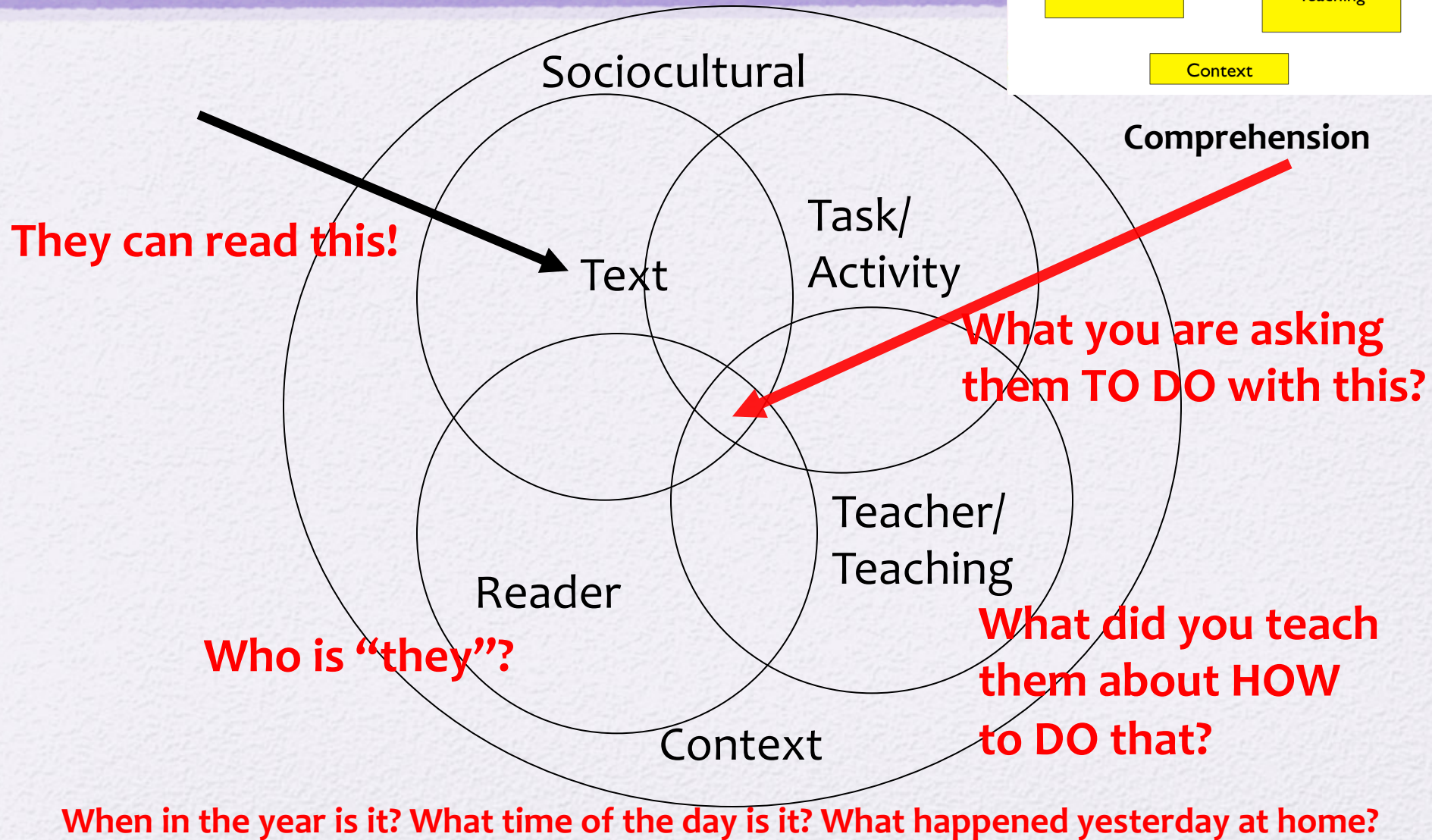
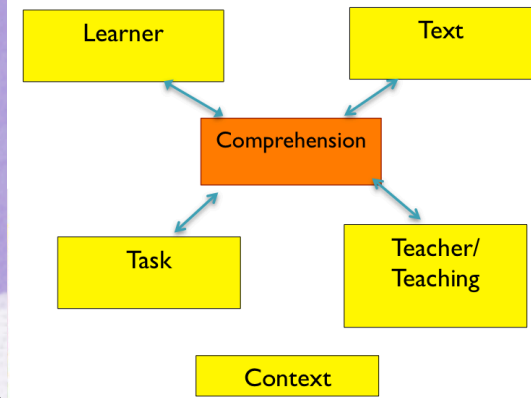
# At your table– 3 minutes

- Are these five factors really separate?
- Draw a picture of how you see the five factors working together to influence comprehension

# How it all fits together

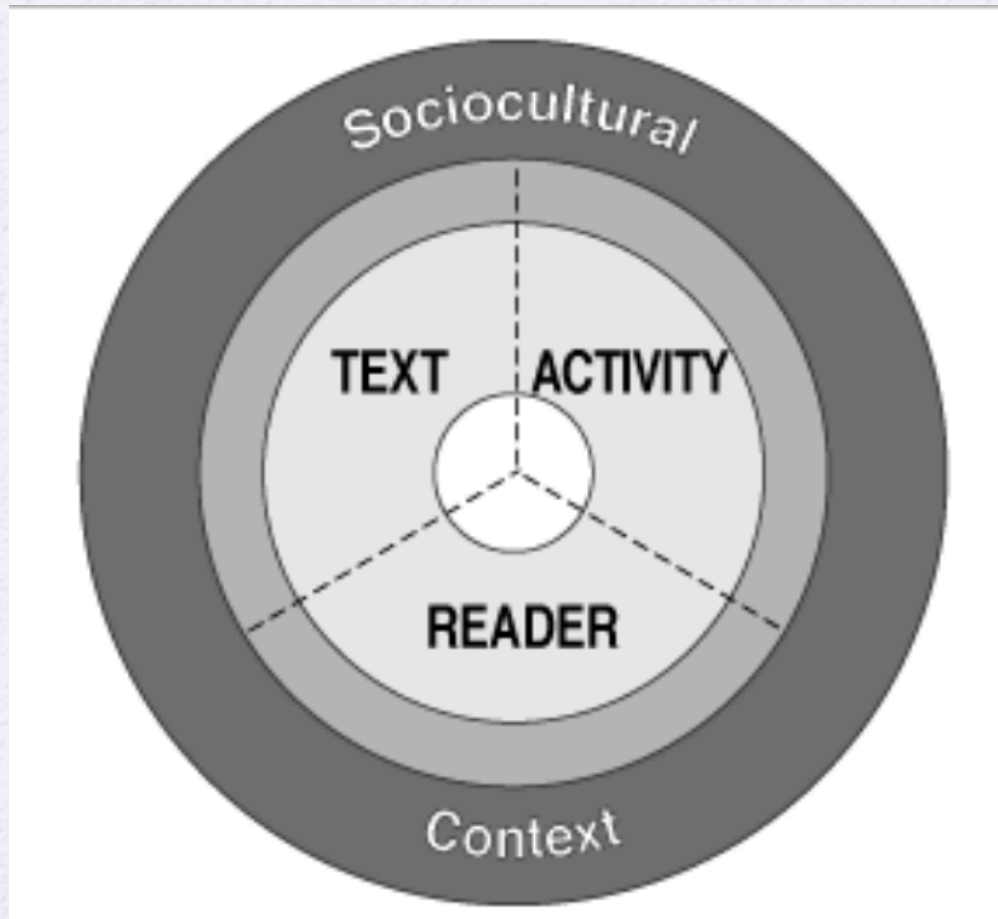
How familiar is this kind of text and task?

How fit with how their “world” outside of school?





# Rand Model of Comprehension (2002)





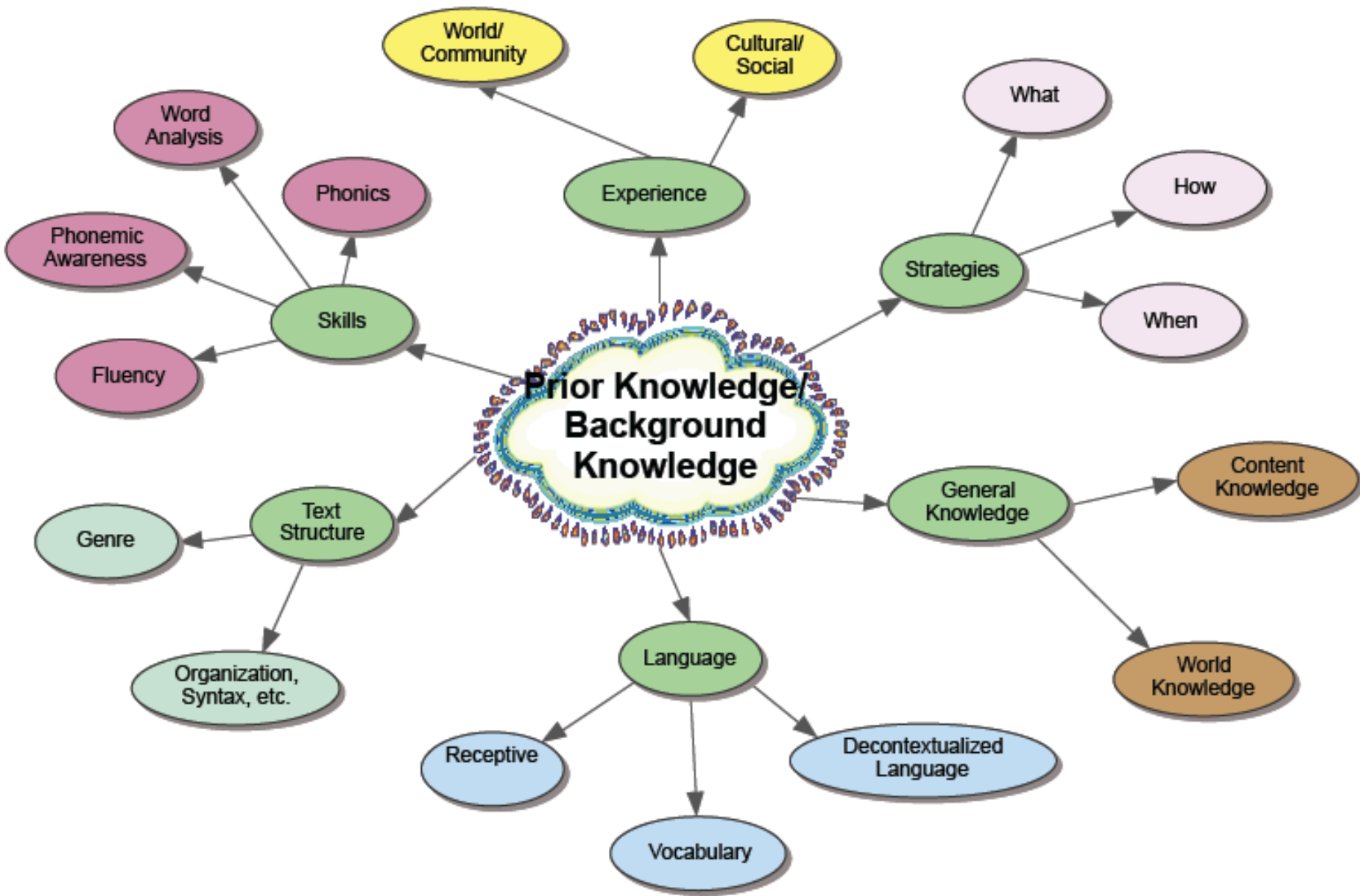
## *"The Reader Factor"*

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### **Background Knowledge**

(draw another picture with  
idea blurbs and arrows)







# *"The Teacher Factor"*

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Knowledge and  
B-D-A



# Before Reading... students need to

- The mantra: “**Activate prior knowledge** and **set a purpose** for reading”
- **Activate prior knowledge** (schema theory):
  - Call up relevant schema about
    - The topic (what I already know?)
      - NOTE: You may have to BUILD this knowledge first!
    - The text (how is this text organized?)
  - Use PK to make predictions
- **Set a purpose:** Motivation, questions, why am I reading? How does this connect with the real world?

# During Reading... students need to

- **M**onitor
- **M**ake connections
- **D**etermine important concepts
- **A**sk questions
- **A**nalyze/critique
- **V**isualize the text
- **I**nfer
- **S**ummarize – retell main ideas
- **S**ynthesize—pull ideas together and add your original insights
- **S**immer/Incubate —take time out to consider/  
reconsider

**M&MDAAVISSS**



# After Reading ... learners benefit most when they

- **Organize and shape: Transform** big ideas (how can I show what I know and understand how it all fits together in my own words?)
- **Reflect and revise**
- **(Publish—**not always necessary, but very authentic and motivating with a real audience)

# MODELING Before-Reading-Activity: Launching a Book

- Planning a book launch: Determine **main ideas (in the book)** AND **big idea (beyond the book/across books)**
- The mantra: “**A**ctivate prior knowledge and **S**et a purpose for reading”
- **A**ctivating prior knowledge (schema theory):
  - Call up relevant schema about
    - The topic (what I already know?)
    - The text (how is this text organized?)
  - Use PK to make predictions
- **S**et a purpose: Motivation, questions, why am I reading? (keep this in mind; maybe explicit first > maybe wait for discussion later)



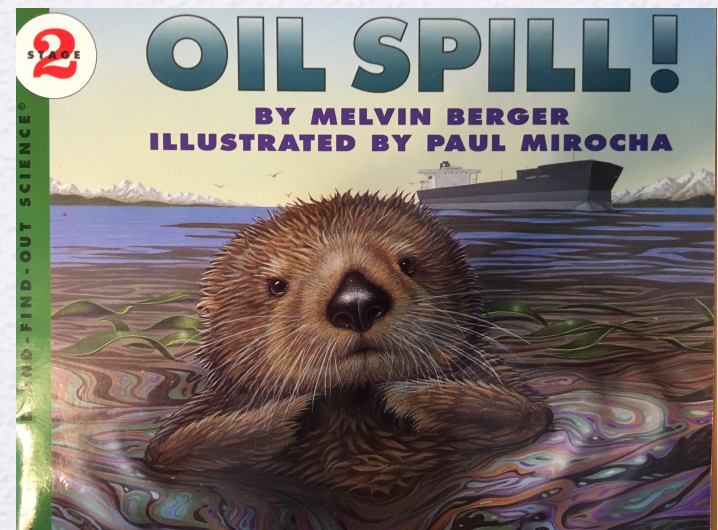
# Main Idea vs. Big Idea

- **Main Ideas: (In the Book)**

- The Exxon Valdez oil spill was one of the worst in US history – many animals killed
- Causes of oil spills ...
- Steps in cleaning up oil spills ....
- Ways to help prevent oil spills ...
- Example of how to turn knowledge into action (letters to senator)!

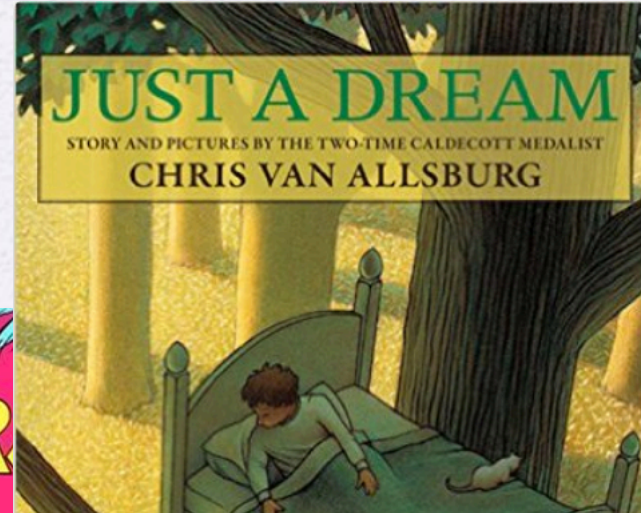
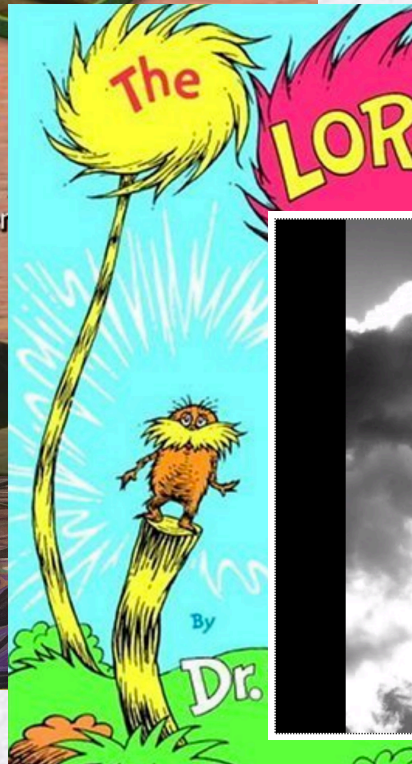
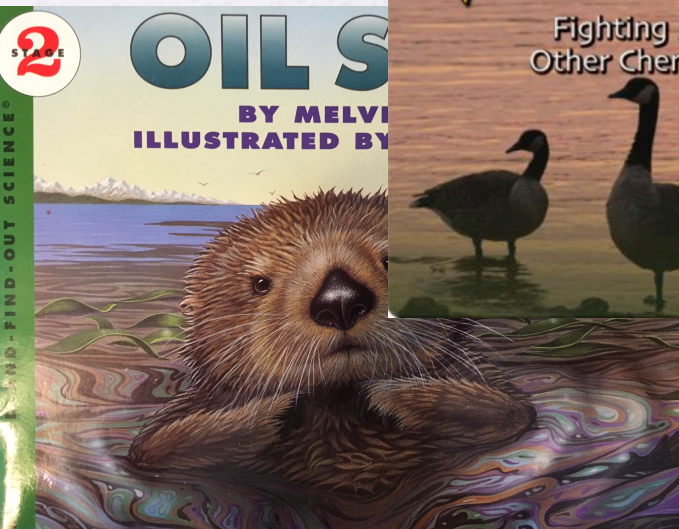
- **Big Idea: (Beyond the book)**  
Human activity greatly impacts animals and the environment

- How do humans change the planet?
- NGSS (science) and CCSS (ELA)





# Text Sets to Extend, Connect, & Engage Readers with Big Ideas





# Conducting a Book Launch

## (Planning stage)

- **REMEMBER:** *Activate prior knowledge + Set a purpose*
- **Main Ideas: (In the Book)**
  - The Exxon Valdez oil spill was one of the worst in US history – many animals killed
  - Causes of oil spills ...
  - Steps in cleaning up oil spills ....
  - Ways to help prevent oil spills ...
  - Example of how to turn knowledge into action (letters to senator)!
- **Big Idea: (Beyond the book)**

Human activity greatly impacts animals and the environment

  - How do humans change the planet?
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# ACTIVATING Prior Knowledge



Narragansett Town Beach









# BUILDING Background Knowledge





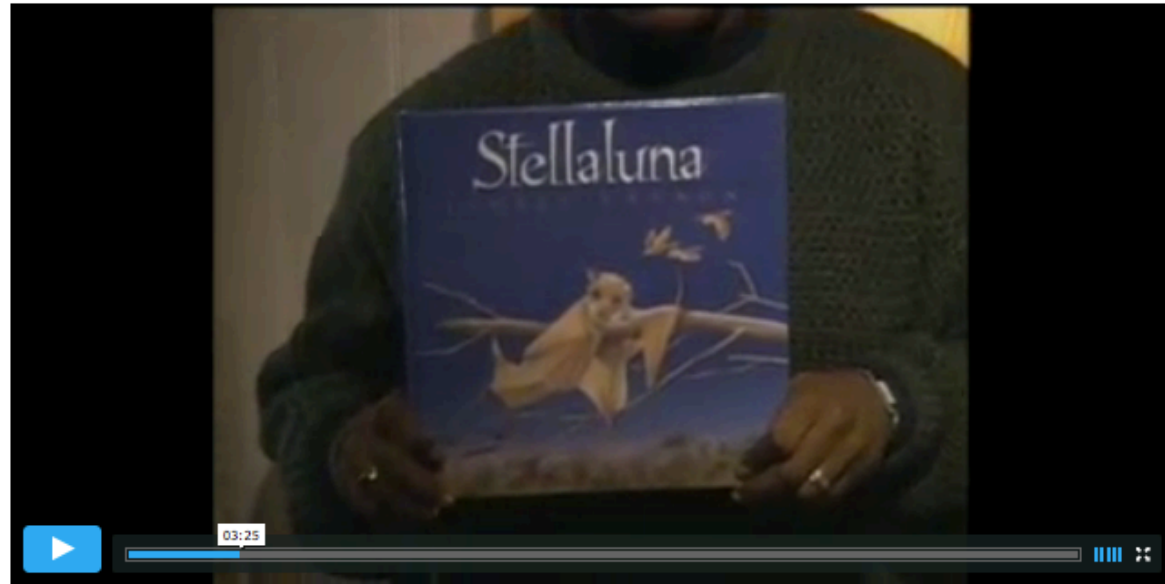
# Setting a [personal] Purpose



**How could this have happened?**

**Is there any way we can help?**

# What about BUILDING background knowledge?



## Stellaluna

from WVPT PLUS 5 years ago NOT YET RATED

This charming story is about a baby bat who is separated from her mother and ends up being raised by a family of birds. LeVar explores the mysterious and fascinating world of nocturnal animals.

**Main Idea?** A baby bat is separated from her mother and ends up being raised by a family of birds

**Big Idea?** How are animals similar and different? (i.e. nocturnal vs. diurnal)



# Planning a Book Launch

- Share your thoughts about **main ideas** and **big ideas** with your planning partner.
- Think about the example I modeled for how to launch *Oil Spill* for some ideas.
- Create a 2-3 minute launch for your text that **engages students** (your peers) in thinking about the ideas and **sets a purpose** for reading.
- Each of you will conduct your book launch in the next class (in jigsaw groups).
- While watching, think: Is this book launch effective? Why/why not? What might you do differently next time?

# Book Launch Choices:

## Groups of 3 people

### **FICTION/ NARRATIVE TEXT**

- Swimmy (#1)
- A Color of His Own (#2)
- Happy Birthday Moon (#3)
- Frederick (#4)

### **NON-FICTION/ INFORMATIONAL TEXT**

- Wild Ways (#5)
- Just Like Earth (#6)
- Seahorse (#6)
- Orphans No More (#7)
- Beat the Heat (#8)
- Stories in the Soil (#9)

### **TRY IT OUT:**

Work in small group to determine the main ideas and one big idea in a children's text & plan a book launch



# Monitor/Self-Assess: Can you accomplish today's objectives?

- Discuss connections between five factors that influence comprehension
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  - Identify the **teacher's role** at each stage of reading (Before, During, and After reading)
  - Observe and apply ways to **launch a book** (pre-reading activity) to **set a context** that engages readers with the **main ideas** and gets them ready to think about the **big ideas**
- **TRY IT OUT:**
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# Homework

- **For next Tuesday Sept. 19**
  - Continue working on your book launch (access narrative books on the wiki)
  - Come next class prepared to teach to three other classmates after some practice with your partner.

## **For next Thursday Sept. 21**

- Read Chapter 6 (Motivation)
- Complete book launch reflection and hand in your typed version of joint plan and individual reflection.